

### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Andrew Patch on 10/15/2009.

The application has been amended as followed:

(1) Claim 27; line 3; delete "a plurality of elements" and insert --a plurality of coupled elements--.

(2) Claim 27; line 12; delete "said seals" and insert --said fluid seals--.

(3) Claim 27; line 15; delete "wherein seals between" and insert --wherein said fluid seals positioned--.

(4) Claim 27; line 19; delete "(at 48)".

(5) Claim 32; lines 5-6; delete "the seals" and insert --the fluid seals--.

(6) Claim 35; line 2; delete "those" and insert --the--.

(7) Claim 36; line 2; delete "those" and insert --the--.

(8) Claim 39; line 2; delete "each coupled element" and insert --each said coupled elements--.

(9) Claim 39; lines 5-6; delete "that of a corresponding coupled element" and insert --each of said coupled elements--.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Art Unit: 3635

Claims 27-28 and 31-46 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art (US Pat. No. 3,981,409) does not disclose combination structures of a modular structure that including connectors having cross-shaped bodies and hollow arms to receive ends of fluid seals as set forth in the claims.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to Chi Q. Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-6847. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-4:00 pm.

If attempt to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Chilcot can be reached at (571) 272-6777.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pairdirect.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at (866) 217-9197.

/C. Q. N./  
Examiner, Art Unit 3635

Application/Control Number: 10/531,597

Page 4

Art Unit: 3635

/Richard E. Chilcot, Jr./

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3635